



# DAILY FAITH PRACTICES

## Transfiguration (B) – 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

Focus: *Now I See!*

### word of life

**“For it is the God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”** (2 Corinthians 4:6 NRSV)

Read 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

The Sunday of the Transfiguration ends the season of Epiphany. Mountain-top experiences, radiant light, and the revelation of God in Jesus Christ permeate the lessons for the day.

The reading from 2 Corinthians reflects these themes. The word “glory” (in Greek *doxa*) is used thirteen times in the verses of 2 Corinthians 3:7–4:6. Paul, the author of this letter to the church in Corinth, defends and defines his ministry as a lifting of the veil to see the full splendor of God in Christ.

1. *Have you experienced a time when you saw something glorious? What was it like?*
2. *How would you describe the glory of God?*

Paul refers to a passage in Exodus to make his defense. It is helpful to read the story. (Read Exodus 34:29-35.) Moses comes down from Mount Sinai after being in the presence of God. Moses’ face is radiant – so much so that the people of Israel are fearful of him. So Moses puts on a veil to cover his face as he proclaims the word of the Lord to the people.

3. *Why does Moses cover his face with a veil?*
4. *What might that have been like to see Moses transformed by God?*

Paul reinterprets the story to shed light on his ministry. He acknowledges that his message is veiled to those who do not believe. Their minds have been blinded and they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, “who is the image of God.” (2 Corinthians 4:3-4 NRSV)

5. *Share examples when a message was veiled.*
6. *What kept you from hearing the message?*

For Paul, the veil is that which keeps the unbeliever from seeing the true light of the Gospel of Christ. As the unbeliever comes to faith, the veil is lifted, and the fullness of God’s glory is seen. Unlike Moses, whose radiance dimmed, the light of the glory of Christ shines in the darkness. And unlike Moses, there is no longer the need to hide beneath a veil. In the face of Jesus, we see “the knowledge of the glory of God.” (2 Corinthians 4:6 NRSV)

7. *Reconsider your examples shared in question 5. Was there a moment when the message became clear?*
8. *What caused the veil to be lifted and clarity to be known?*

The glory of Christ becomes the foundation for the legitimacy of Paul’s work and message. Paul asserts that the message he proclaims is not about himself; rather, it is about Christ Jesus as Lord (4:5). God has shone in and through Paul to enlighten the faithful and to bring others to faith. His posture is one of a slave for Jesus’ sake, willing to serve and to give of self for the sake of the Gospel.

9. *What does it mean to proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord?*
10. *How does God shine in and through you?*

## **word among us**

Once there was a wedding of a beautiful young couple. Susan, the bride, loved to dress fashionably. Everything – her hair, her wardrobe, her accessories – was always just perfect. Bill, however, was a little less particular. He was a practical jokester and loved to surprise his friends.

As the marriage service began, Bill nervously stood at the front of the aisle as the bride wearing a beautifully tiered veil and sequined dress elegantly walked down. When Susan reached Bill, they both turned to the other and took each other's hands. As Bill gently reached down and lifted up her veil and saw her face, he took a step back, threw back his head as if in surprise, and said, "Oh, it's YOU!" As laughter filled the sanctuary, he quickly said, "You look radiant!" The congregation broke out in spontaneous applause, and the pastor, with a big smile, quickly said, "Let us pray."

1. *What are other examples of people wearing a veil?*
2. *What purpose does the veil serve?*

On this Transfiguration Sunday, we hear words about God's glory. We confess in our creed, "We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ ... God from God, Light from Light...." In saying these words, we are echoing Paul's proclamation, "For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6 NRSV) We are proclaiming that the veil that separated us from God has been lifted, and we see God clearly in the face of Christ.

3. *Describe the veil separating us from God.*
4. *How have you experienced the veil of God being lifted?*

In Jesus, we see God clearly. And we also clearly see our calling. We are not to be in the limelight. Our words and actions are not to point to us. Rather, we are to point to the true Light, Jesus Christ.

## **faith practice in daily life**

### **Live Among God's People**

There is a time in the service of Holy Baptism when a candle is lit. As it is given to the newly-baptized (or to the parents or sponsors), these words are spoken: "Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship – Holy Baptism*, page 231) Our lives of faith are lives which reflect the glory of God. We are called to be the light of the world; but our light is but a reflection of the true Light seen in Christ.

And so, we live among God's faithful people, continually learning about the light of Christ, continually "trimming our wicks" in prayer, study, worship, and confession, continually reflecting the wondrous glory of God through Christ in us.

5. *What do you hope you remember from this lesson?*

### **Prayer**

O Light of the World, shine upon us with your glory. Help us to be reflections of your Light. Amen

### ***last word***

Light a candle and pray  
that you might be a light to others.